

West Oxfordshire Community Transport Ltd

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 17.00 on Saturday 21 August 2021 at the ICE Centre, Langdale Hall, Witney and virtually on Zoom

Present: Directors – Margaret Burden (Chair), Mike Alexander, Vivian Woodell, David Bates and Mike Parker

and members - Andrew Lyon (Head of Operations, Luci Ashbourne, Stephen Bennett, Kay Collett, Andy Crick, Gerry Fletcher (Driver), Irene McPherson, Monica Osborne, Karen Southworth, David Miles (Volunteer), Liz Leffman, Ron Wood (Driver), Henriette & Hugo Kerr (virtually)

Observing: Owen Collins

Apologies received from: Ida Awde, Judith Bainton, Michael Brown, Howard Chirgwin, Andrew Coles, Robert Courts, Graeme Dale, Matthew Goodman, Raymond Hall, Ros Kent, Rosemary Osmond, Kathryn Streeter, Keith Streeter, Jill Thorley, Cyril Tennant, Chris Tennant

Introduction

Margaret Burden welcomed everybody and explained that two members were participating on Zoom. Owen Collins was appointed as a teller.

1. Presentation by Liz Leffman, leader of Oxfordshire County Council

Liz explained how she had encouraged the inception of WOCT and had supported it through donations from her Councillor Priority Fund. She explained how reducing everybody's carbon footprint was vital and that Oxfordshire County Council saw this as a high priority. Accordingly, public transport to help people not use cars was an important matter as was the proper linking of bus and train timetables. In all of this, organisations like WOCT were performing a role to be much admired.

2. Minutes

The minutes of 2020 annual general meeting were accepted and there were no matters arising.

3. Review of the year

Margaret Burden talked of the year ended 28 February 2021 and the significant impact of Covid 19. During the first 4 months of lockdown the Board met virtually every fortnight to assess the latest developments and consider an appropriate schedule for resuming services. The changes required to bus timetables had been extremely time consuming to effect and drivers had been furloughed. David Miles (Ops volunteer) had been a wonderful support.

The new Carterton service had been planned, but its start delayed until March 2021. There had been changes to both directors and volunteers and the website had been improved to make it more accessible. She also explained that WOCT liaised well with other community bus operators to maximise passenger benefit.

4. Annual report

Mike Alexander gave an overview of finances for the past year explained it had been good for WOCT's finances and that reserves had now been built up to a much more comfortable level. The adoption of the Directors' Report and Financial Statements was duly proposed and seconded and agreed unanimously by the meeting.

5. Audit

The motion to dis-apply the requirement for a full audit for the year to 28 February 2022 was duly proposed and seconded and agreed by the meeting.

6. Result of ballot for election of Directors

Margaret Burden announced that Vivian Woodell had topped the poll and that he and Mike Parker would now serve for three years and that David Bates and Mike Alexander for two. She also advised that David Miles had put his name forward but because of the significant conflict of interest with his being a director of First and Last, a local community bus service provider, and the fact that he would have had to sign the Directors' Code of Conduct confirming no such conflict exists his name was not on the ballot paper.

7. Fundraising

Margaret Burden explained that some 30% to 35% of WOCT's income came from fundraising. She explained that a National Lottery bid, which successfully passed two hurdles was then excluded as it did not directly benefit those affected by Covid 19. Funds had however been obtained from CBSSG (Covid Bus Services Start up Grant), Concessionary fares (paid at pre-Covid levels), Power to Change, Westmill Solar and local Councillors which were gratefully acknowledged. She also mentioned all those who had provided funds toward the cost of the new Depot.

8. Operations and Premises

Andrew Lyon explained that Covid meant that it had been a very odd year! Services had been changed three time which meant an enormous amount of work dealing with all related issues. Once services resumed the first thought was for safety of both passengers and drivers. The Depot has made a great difference. Drivers were thanked for their excellent work during a difficult year.

He talked about buses and how much maintenance was required. There had been lots of breakdowns but lost services had been very few indeed.

All members thanked Andrew for carrying out his role so effectively during such a difficult year.

9. Questions

A question was asked about the bus route through Milton and the possibility of entering Charlbury Garden Centre and Andrew Lyon explained that WOCT could not accept money from commercial organisation to alter routes to suit their purposes.

10. Any Other Business

None

11. Close

Margaret Burden was thanked not only for effectively chairing the meeting but also for her unstinting work on behalf of WOCT and the meeting was closed at 18.00

MJA 24/8/21